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ABSTRACT

This document is a report of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services on juvenile justice, education, and employment designed to present policy formation, identify major policy implications, document the extent to which former deficiencies have been remedied, and establish a policy foundation for future program development. The major findings of the report are described as the following: (1) current preventive efforts in the juvenile justice system are limited and there is little evidence that even these limited prevention programs are effective; (2) the single intake system has not increased diversion rates or lowered detention rates; (3) youth services have made enormous progress over the past several years in the development of community program alternatives to training schools; (4) educational resources, such as reading development, can greatly reduce or prevent juvenile crime; and (5) the creation of employment opportunities represents another resource for preventing delinquency. (ABL)

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CHILDREN AND YOUTH ISSUE PAPER SERIES

REPORT I

JUVENILE JUSTICE, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Executive Office of the Governor
Office of Planning and Budgeting
Glenn W. Robertson, Director

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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the first in a series of children and youth issue papers based on several programs in the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and other state agencies. The first version was printed as a single report in March 1981. The papers are based on evaluation findings and monitoring data that have been generated over the past eight years. The papers are designed to: a) present, in one place, most of the policy-related information we now have on HRS and other children and youth programs; b) identify the major policy implications of the available information; c) document the extent to which deficiencies identified in the 1981 report have been remedied; and, d) establish a policy foundation for future program development. The report is far from exhaustive. There are many programs and policy issues that cannot be adequately addressed because of the lack of information. Other programs, such as day care, are addressed in a very summary fashion, because more extensive information and analyses of policy concerns (The Day Care Task Force Report) can be found elsewhere.

The State is investing a large amount of resources (over $250 million--not counting AFDC in HRS children and youth programs. Many of these programs are outstandingly effective in meeting the needs of abused, neglected, delinquent, emotionally disturbed, retarded and physically ill children. Others have the potential to be much more effective if they were better funded or more adequately managed. Improved organization and management were two of the principal goals identified by the 1980 Legislature when it created the Children, Youth and Families Program Office by placing the youth services, child welfare, single intake, day care and other programs in a single administrative unit at the departmental headquarters level. This report is offered in support of efforts to achieve these same goals.

The amount of descriptive, evaluative and monitoring information varies across programs. The Florida Juvenile Justice System has been evaluated and monitored extensively. Programs for emotionally disturbed children have received much less evaluative or monitoring attention. The children's health programs have received significantly more attention but far more work is needed before definitive policy analyses can be done. There is enough evaluative and monitoring information available on the child welfare system to document the extensive changes that have occurred in this area since 1981, although more program outcome and client impact data are needed. It is expected, however, that in the near future we will know more about several of these data deficient areas as more evaluations

are completed and the children and youth component of the HRS client information system is implemented.

The following evaluation and monitoring findings have been taken from more than 30 studies and monitoring reports conducted by HRS and others over the past four years. The findings presented represent only a fraction of all the material generated by the studies. They appear, however, to be the most significant findings given their relevance to major state policies. The Children, Youth and Families Planning Unit, ASP Office of Policy Development, the HRS Evaluation Office and other HRS units have done an outstanding job of producing the information used here.

The reports in the Children and Youth Issue Paper Series will be printed in the following order:

1. Juvenile Justice/Education and Employment
2. Child Welfare and Day Care
3. Children's Health and Developmental Services
4. An Overview of Children and Youth Issues in Florida (September, 1986)

It is hoped that these papers will help lay the groundwork for more extensive and systematic assessment and policy development efforts in the areas addressed. One of the principle means for such efforts is the state planning process established by the Legislature in the Comprehensive Plan Act of 1985. All state agencies must develop, and annually update, agency functional plans which are designed to identify strategies for achieving the goals and policies in the State Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Legislautre in 1985. The agencies are encouraged to use the information and policy recommendations in the Children and Youth Issue Papers in the formulation of the Children's Sections of their functional plans. The papers will be used by the Office of Planning and Budgeting staff in reviewing the preliminary and final versions of the Plans.

The Juvenile Justice/Education and Employment Paper is divided into several sections, beginning with detention and intake and concluding with a wide ranging discussion of education and employment related responses to the juvenile crime problem. This format is designed to acquaint the reader with some of the more specific and saliant policy issues within the juvenile justice system (JJS) before moving to a more systematic policy perspective on juvenile crime.

The major finding and recommendations presented in this report are briefly summarized below.

- Current preventive efforts in the juvenile justice system are limited and there is little evidence that even these limited prevention programs are effective. Diversion and limited penetration of the juvenile justice system, however, are effective secondary prevention strategies and should be a prominent feature of Florida's juvenile justice policy framework and program operations.

- The single intake system has not increased diversion rates or lowered detention rates. In fact since its inception, diversion rates decreased and detention increased until 1980 when the new detention criteria produced a 20% drop in the detention rate. Detention rates reached their highest level (35% of felony referrals) ever after the repeal of the criteria in 1981. A more flexible set of criteria developed by representatives from all groups involved in the juvenile justice system should be considered by the Legislature in 1986. The intake processing of dependency referrals has improved since 1981.

- Youth Services has made enormous progress over the past several years in the development of community program alternatives to training schools. The community programs have proven to be cost-effective and should be expanded in order to reduce the number of non-serious offenders placed in a training school. The current deinstitutionalization initiative, including the closure of McPherson Training School in 1984, represents a response to this recommendation. The Department's strategic plan mandates the move towards the reduction of the population of the two remaining training schools to 200 each by July 31, 1987. Specialized services for the serious and chronic offender will be developed in conjunction with the reduction in population.

- Educational sources, particularly in the area of reading, can contribute greatly to the prevention or reduction of juvenile crime. In order to strengthen the alternative education program which serves many students who are at risk of serious delinquent behavior, the State

should implement the major recommendations of the 1985 Alternative Education Task Force and the 1981 OPB Evaluation of Alternative Education. This program is still a substantially untapped resource in the State's effort to reduce and prevent delinquency.

- The creation of employment opportunities represents another major resource in the State's effort to prevent delinquency. The State should develop a comprehensive youth policy which would include a clear emphasis on the development of the following kinds of programs: Youth Service Corps (similar in design to the old CCC program); School-Business Partnerships; Youth Enterprises; Work-Study Programs; and Job Readiness Training. These initiatives should be part of a comprehensive policy designed to prepare the State's non-college youth for immediate and productive participation in the State's economy and in their communities.

The primary recommendation of the Children and Youth Issue Paper Series is that the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, the Office of Planning and Budgeting, and the Governor's Constituency for Children assume collective responsibility for formulating a comprehensive State Youth Policy by October, 1987. The cross program, cross agency perspectives, and responsibilities of the latter two offices will help ensure a comprehensive approach to the development of a State Youth Policy. Several other state and local agencies and organizations, including the Legislature, the judiciary, law enforcement, university researchers and private advocacy groups should also participate in the development of the State Youth Policy.

The Children and Youth sections of the 1986 Agency Functional Plans should provide the foundation for the development of the State Youth Policy which could be used to coordinate the revisions to be included in the 1988 Functional Plans of those agencies with responsibilities in the children and youth areas.

The Youth Policy should be designed, at a minimum, to address the following major issues:

- The relationships among school failure, youth unemployment and delinquency.

- The future of the juvenile justice system--what criteria should govern decisions concerning diversions and commitment alternatives.

- Child welfare and the family--how to protect the child while promoting family integrity.

- Children's medical services--how can they be better coordinated and service gaps eliminated.

- Emotionally disturbed children--how to attain client and system accountability, coordination between HRS and the public schools, and a proper balance between state and private sector roles and responsibilities.

The Constituency and OPB may decide to address other issues as they develop their action plan for the comprehensive state youth policy.

A December 31, 1985 editorial by the Jacksonville Times Union gives a compelling rationale for the development of a comprehensive state youth policy.

> Instead of the piecemeal approach that Florida has been using to attack its growing problems in youth services, the state should embark on a thorough study in 1986 to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive strategy for the future.
>
> In the field of juvenile delinquency, the differences of opinion are so dramatic that they urgently require the intervention of an impartial arbiter who can assess the problem.
>
> Prosecutors and some judges say that secure detention facilities for juveniles are being phased out or phased down to the point where there is no place to put offenders who need to be in custody.
>
> However, some youth workers and child advocates say exactly the opposite -- that Florida has embarked on a course of overuse of vengeful incarceration rather than rehabilitation.
>
> The gulf between the sides is so wide that there is an urgent need for an outside assessment of the situation.

> Florida desperately needs a new blueprint to follow in a bewildering situation where not only the facilities are inadequate but even expert perceptions of the problem -- and suggestions for its solution -- are irreconcilably at odds.

The OPB Children and Youth Issue Paper Series is intended to help lay the groundwork for a comprehensive youth policy and strategy as recommended in this insightful editorial.

DETENTION

The detention criteria passed by the Legislature in 1980 produced a 20% drop in detention admissions and a less than 1% increase in the number of juveniles who failed to show for their hearings or committed a new offense.

Prior to the implementation of the detention criteria, there was substantial evidence that many children were being inappropriately detained and, in some districts, for excessively long periods of time. Over 1,700 children statewide were detained during the period from December 1977 through March 1979 because no one (parents) could be found to supervise them. Districts IV, V and IX detained a disproportionately large number of children in order to ensure their appearance in court. Statewide, over 10,000 annually were detained for this reason even though there was little or no correlation between the detention rate across districts and either "hearing no-shows" or subsequent offense rates.

The detention criteria adopted in 1980 proved to be unpopular with many elements of the juvenile justice system, in spite of considerable evidence, as noted above, that they worked quite well. This resulted in passage the next year of legislation which instituted less specific criteria, with state attorneys having final jurisdiction over the detention decision. As a result, high levels of detention continue in spite of dramatic decreases in juvenile crime in recent years. Considerable savings could be achieved if a compromise between the 1980 criteria and current procedures could be adopted by the legislature.

The number of children detained relative to arrests is increasing. When the 1980 criteria were used in FY1980-81, the ratio of resident days in secure detention (281,892) to number of arrests (100,738) was 2.16. In FY1983-84, the ratio of resident days in secure detention (378,126) to number of arrests (72,759) was 5.20. If the 2.16 ratio could have been maintained, the number of total resident days could have been reduced by 138,734. With a cost of $47.78 per child day in FY1982-83 for secure detention, considerable savings could be realized.

The non-secure program has helped cushion the effect the change in criteria has had on the secure detention facilities. The average daily population of the non-secure detention program has increased 144% since these criteria changed (161.8 to 394.8) as opposed to a 33.8% increase in secure detention populations (772.3 to 1033.4). At the same time, the percentage of children detained placed in non-secure detention

increased from 13.8% to 24.3%. These data indicate that the secure detention populations would have increased even more dramatically were it not for the non-secure detention program.

The need to consider a compromise designed to reduce unnecessary detention is also indicated by the fact that, all other variables being equal, a juvenile offender's chances of being committed are significantly increased if he/she is detained prior to the adjudicatory hearing. (Frazier, 1984)

The State should develop and implement a modified version of the detention criteria that the Legislature passed in 1981 and repealed in 1982. The lack of a juvenile bail bond system, and the current tendency of detention decision makers to detain thousands of juveniles who are, based on their criminal records, neither dangerous nor unlikely to appear for their court hearings, makes an extremely compelling case for more detailed, rigorous criteria than those represented by the rather open-ended, nebulous guidelines now in use. The development of these criteria should be a joint undertaking involving the Legislature, Governor's Office, Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, the courts, state attorneys and law enforcement. The final product should be a set of criteria to be considered by the Legislature in 1987.

Formal Handling and Diversion

Even though the juvenile crime rate in Florida has decreased over the past four years, the percentage of juveniles referred to intake who are sent to court has increased considerably. The vast majority of juveniles referred to intake are minor offenders, most of whom (about 60-65%) have been referred for the first time. Only 6% are referred for violent offenses.

TABLE 1

FLORIDA
JUVENILE ARREST RATES
1980-1984

Year	Population Ages 10-17*	Number of Arrests Ages 0-17**	Arrests per 1000 Population At Risk
1980	1,167,878	95,239	81.5
1981	1,177,685	83,537	70.9
1982	1,176,823	76,381	64.9
1983	1,170,235	73,917	63.2
1984	1,176,612	77,253	65.7

*"Population at Risk" indicates public and private school enrollment, grades 4-12 (ages 10-17).

**Arrest data obtained from Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Annual Reports 1980-83. During 1984, juvenile arrests comprised only 13.9% of all arrests.

Data from several different sources show that diversion from formal processing is a very cost-effective method of handling most juveniles referred to the juvenile justice system. The re-referral and commitment rates of children diverted from court at intake are relatively low, 41% and 6% respectively during a 2.5 year follow-up. Yet, over the past six years, the percentage of referrals diverted has dropped from over 70% to about 50% of total referrals. Given the 30% drop in total referrals since 1979, the increase in percentage of referrals handled formally has prevented the State from realizing both a substantial cost saving and increased effectiveness (as measured by recidivism) in the operation of the JJS.

Most criminal behavior by youth between the ages of 13-18 will be outgrown. Fewer than 2% of juveniles referred to the juvenile justice system enter adult corrections, and fewer than 30% of all inmates in DOC have juvenile records (Community Alternatives to Prison Study, OPB 1981).

Many young people between these ages who are charged with misdemeanors or with non-violent felonies may appropriately be dealt with outside the juvenile system. For some, a simple warning is sufficient. Others may be properly referred to community mediation/arbitration, restitution, or job and career programs, remedial and vocational education, independent living preparation, or wilderness programs. Maximum use of these alternatives, particularly those which keep families united, is

more likely to benefit the youth and the community, and free the courts to deal with chronic and violent juvenile offenders.

The major portion of referrals should be prevented from entering the JJS through effective, systematic diversion strategies in which law enforcement, schools, families, and other community agents plan coordinated roles through such vehicles or community arbitration. All children who are seriously emotionally disturbed, mentally-retarded or suffering from destructive family situations should be treated outside the JJS in special treatment and child welfare programs.

The Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services should establish a goal of diverting over 60% of all referrals by June 1988. Memoranda of agreement should be developed between HRS District Children, Youth and Families staff and law enforcement, state attorneys, schools and community agencies which identify the parts that each will play in a general effort to reduce unnecessary and wasteful penetration of the JJS by non-dangerous juveniles with limited offense records.

Community Programs and Institutions

As shown in the table below, the most cost-effective programs in the JJS are the relatively less restrictive programs, particularly community control, the intensive counseling, and the Associated Marine Institute programs. These programs are designed to curb the juvenile's anti-social behavior by restricting his freedom and identifying and treating the causes of his/her problems without needlessly interrupting his ties to the community and incurring the costs of incarceration.

TABLE 2

CYF DELINQUENCY COMMITMENT PROGRAMS
COST-EFFECTIVENESS RANKINGS

Overall Ranking[1]	Program		(Point Total)[2]	Cost Per Case[3]	(Ranking)	Percent of Felony and Misdemeanor Persons Offense Admissions	(Ranking)	Recidivism	(Ranking)
1	Intensive Counseling	(NR)	(3)	$1,110	(1)	21	(1)	22%	(1)
2	TRY Center	(NR)	(11)	2,242	(5)	21	(1)	33%	(5)
3	Halfway House	(R)	(13)	3,626	(8)	19	(3)	24%	(2)
4	Associated Marine Institutes	(NR)	(14)	3,432	(7)	18	(4)	28%	(3)
5	STOP	(R)	(18)	2,116	(4)	9	(10)	30%	(4)
6	Family Group Homes*	(R)	(20)	1,147	(2)	11	(9)	44%	(9)
7	Training Schools	(R)	(22)	7,257	(12)	20	(2)	42%	(8)
8	START Centers	(R)	(23)	4,036	(10)	16	(6)	40%	(7)
8	STEP*	(R)	(23)	1,528	(3)	7	(11)	44%	(9)
9	San Antonio Boys Village	(R)	(25)	2,789	(6)	13	(8)	54%	(11)
10	Jacksonville Youth Development Center	(R)	(26)	3,796	(9)	18	(4)	63%	(13)
11	Group Treatment Home	(R)	(28)	7,092	(11)	17	(5)	55%	(12)

NR = non-residential

R = residential

*Intended to give priority to misdemeanant commitments.

[1]Lower scores assumed to indicate relative cost-effectiveness.

[2]Point total derived by addition of three rankings.

[3]1984-85 cost figures.

[4]September through December 1982 commitments.

[5]Considerable caution should be exercised in comparison of these recidivism figures due to differences in client characteristics among programs, such as age, severity and number of offenses, and extent of previous delinquency.

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This table shows that: 1) A little under half of juveniles currently in institutional programs have the same kind of client profiles and offense histories as the juveniles in community programs. 2) Non-residential commitment and community control programs are substantially less expensive and at least as effective in terms of recidivism as institutional programs. 3) Community-based residential programs are less expensive and at least as effective in terms of recidivism as institutional programs.

A greater number of offenders should be placed on community control in lieu of more restrictive placements. Community control should involve more service brokerage and advocacy activities. Opportunities for victim restitution should be pursued vigorously. Job development and placement activity should become a common feature of community control and after care work and the number of community control and aftercare counselors should not be tied to caseload size, but rather to the size of the group (age 10-17) and the juvenile arrest rate--this will prevent "caseload padding."

There is no apparent need for any expansion of commitment programs within the JJS. There is no reason to expect a significant increase in the number of JJS referrals over the next several years because of the diminishing proportion and number of persons in the 10-17 age group. Moreover, if the policies (increased diversion and use of probation and the least restrictive community commitment programs) recommended here were implemented, the number of committed juveniles would diminish, thus further reducing the need for commitment slots.

In an effort to respond to the policy implications of these facts, a major program to expand community services coupled with reduced use of the training schools has begun. The Alyce D. McPherson Training School was closed at the end of 1984.

The Serious Offender

The juvenile crime rate has declined by 25.8% since 1975-76. Fewer than 3% of all referrals (arrests) to the juvenile justice system are for violent offenses and two-thirds of all referred juveniles are first-time offenders. In short, the vast majority of referred juveniles are not dangerously violent and have not been extensively involved in delinquent behavior. There is a clear and compelling need to focus on serious (violent and/or repeat) offenders in order to ensure that they pay a just price for their destructive acts. The focus should be narrow enough, however, to avoid pulling relatively minor offenders who are not serious threats to society deep into the juvenile justice system. Needless penetration of the system

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is costly, both in terms of tax dollars and increased threats to society later by juveniles hardened through their experiences in the system.

The State could handle the serious offender issue by restricting training schools to violent (murder, rape, aggravated assault, armed robbery and serious arson) and repeat (committed twice or more for felonies) offenders with average lengths of stay of 9 to 12 months with provisions for longer stays for the most serious cases. This approach would be designed to preserve the integrity of the system while also meeting the policy problems associated with the serious offender issue. The courts' power to retain jurisdiction over sentence length should not be any greater than that allowed judges in the adult system.

In developing incarceration-oriented programs for the serious offender, careful attention should be given to the findings and recommendations contained in previous studies. Robert B. Coates has noted that: "In the Harvard Center's study of deinstitutionalization in Massachusetts, among the most serious offenders in the sample (i.e., who had committed crimes against persons), those who left secure facilities but continued to receive forms of support through non-residentail programs did nearly twice as well in terms of recidivism as did those comparable youths who were simply returned to the community under nominal parole supervision. Thus, I conclude that youths who merely return to their social networks without continuing professional help pose a greater risk to community protection than do those who are assisted by staff to reestablish ties and negotiate their social networks. Given the high and necessary costs of care in a secure residence, this minimal extra cost is money well spent both to protect the interests of the community and to better the future of the youngster."

Comparison of Decision Point Outcome Across Districts

Table 3 presents a general profile of decision point outcomes across the eleven HRS districts for FY1984-85. Two major policy relevant conclusions can be drawn from these data. First, there is clearly a large amount of variance among the districts on each one of the decision point outcome variables. The range of variance for the delinquency rate and four of the major decision points are shown below.

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TABLE 3

Delinquency Rate	Detention Rate	Judicial Rate	Community Control Rate
Dist. 1=.038	Dist. 3=.308	Dist. 10=.40	Dist. 9=.173
Dist. 9=.062	Dist. 7=.602	Dist. 5 =.70	Dist. 5=.271

Commitment Rate
Dist. 8=.056
Dist. 5=.098

The range of variance is between 60% and almost 100% in the case of the detention rate.

A substantial amount of variance in decision point outcomes is inevitable. The variance in decisions of juvenile justice systems decision-makers reflect the variance in community attitudes toward juvenile offenders, differences in social philosophies concerning juvenile delinquency, and differences in levels of objective threat to the community represented by juvenile crime. There is a policy question, however, concerning how much variance in decision point outcomes should be tolerated within a statewide program, policy and budget framework. Extremely high detention and commitment rates are expensive and should be justified in terms of such effectiveness measures as lower relative recividism and overall delinquency rates. This brings us to the second major conclusion that can be drawn from the data in Table 3.

There appears to be no substantively significant relationship among the decision point outcome rates, or between them and the delinquency rates across the districts. Higher detention and commitment rates are not consistently related to lower delinquency rates nor are the latter consistently related to lower detention and commitment rates. For instance, Districts 2 and 11 have high commitment and low delinquency rates. Districts 4 and 5, however, have the highest commitment rates and high delinquency rates, while District 1 has the lowest delinquency rate, and moderate (No. 7) commitment and detention rates.

On the whole, it does not appear that high detention, judicial handling and commitment rates can be justified in terms of superior effectiveness. High rates on these decision point variables do, however, contribute to increased costs. Therefore, systematic efforts should be made through monitoring, training, public relations, and funding strategies to reduce the highest

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Table 4

General Profile of Delinquency Factors
FY 84-85

District	Population at Risk	Delinquency Cases Opened	(1) Delinquency Rate (#2 ÷ #1)	(2) Secure Detention Admissions	(3) Detention Index #1 (#4 ÷ #1)	(4) Detention Index #2 (#4 ÷ #2)	(5) Judicial Handling Rate (%)	(6) Community Control Admissions	(7) Community Control Rate #1 (#8 ÷ #1)	(8) Community Control Rate #2 (#8 ÷ #2)	(9) Commitments	(10) Commitment Rate #1 (#11 ÷ #1)	(11) Commitment Rate #2 (#11 ÷ #2)	(12)	(13)
1	60001	2277	.038	984	.016	.432	56.1	468	.008	.206	174	.003	.076		
2	60278	2521	.042	1263	.021	.501	61.1	512	.009	.203	207	.003	.082		
3	89912	4033	.045	1242	.014	.308	63.0	851	.010	.211	322	.004	.080		
4	130490	7180	.055	4161	.032	.580	50.2	1689	.013	.235	668	.005	.093		
5	90317	5145	.057	2486	.028	.483	70.0	1397	.016	.272	504	.006	.098		
6	152140	8022	.053	4024	.026	.502	69.4	1626	.011	.203	541	.004	.067		
7	133303	5908	.044	3556	.027	.602	63.8	1077	.008	.182	459	.004	.078		
8	68145	3677	.054	1335	.020	.363	52.0	827	.012	.225	208	.003	.057		
9	95730	5914	.062	3314	.035	.560	47.1	1023	.011	.173	333	.004	.056		
10	105957	6227	.059	2501	.024	.402	40.0	1313	.012	.211	433	.004	.070		
11	195180	7586	.039	4435	.023	.585	61.4	1635	.008	.216	650	.003	.086		
STATE	1181453	56954	.048	29301	.025	.515	57.9	12271	.010	.216	4499	.004	.079		

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rates among the districts. Some of these strategies (e.g., detention criteria, increased non-secure detention and diversion resources) have been discussed above. Other strategies can be developed through joint efforts with other state and local, including private sector, agencies and organizations. The potential contributions of education and employment related agencies are discussed in the following sections.

Juvenile Justice and the Public Schools

The relationship between delinquency and educational failure has been demonstrated many times. Delinquency is a product of many variables and the complex interrelationships among them. Educational failure, family instability, and delinquency appear to be highly interrelated and are explained more by socio-economic conditions than any other single variable. That is, poor children are more likely to experience educational failure, to come from broken homes and get arrested for delinquent acts than non-poor children.

We should not overlook the fact, however, that several studies have found that most (90% plus) middle-class juveniles also commit delinquent acts, but are less likely to get caught. This is in part explained by the findings that poor juveniles commit more delinquent offenses, particularly serious offenses, and that middle class offenders are more likely to exhibit a conciliatory attitude toward law enforcement and JJS personnel.

Education is the policy area that can be most directly influenced by State government which plays a major role in funding and establishing the direction and content of educational programs. Employment-related policies and transfer payments (public welfare), which have the greatest influence on the extent of poverty, are mainly the responsibility of the Federal government. This does not mean that states cannot play a major role in creating work opportunities for their economically disadvantaged residents as, in fact, we suggest be done in the following section. Education, however, is more directly under the control of the State and represents an area where the State can most directly affect the lives of children.

In a 1976 HRS study, it was found that for juveniles in the Florida JJS an improvement in reading ability is associated with a reduction in recidivism rates. Research by Elliot, et al., shows that school failure encourages delinquent behavior to an extent that varies considerably among individuals. Elliot found, for instance, that in many cases school experiences may be so negative that dropping-out leads to a

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reduction in delinquent behavior. Dropping-out, of course, is not the preferred solution to the problem of delinquency. This finding shows how educational failure contributes to delinquency through a reduction in the juvenile's sense of self-esteem and the resources required to succeed economically.

One of the principal purposes of the Alternative Education Program established by the Legislature in 1978 was the development of educational services designed to meet the special needs of children who were failing in the conventional program and had become disruptive to the point of being suspended, expelled, dropping-out, or referred to the JJS for delinquent acts. The most recent evaluation of the program (OPB, 1981) showed that it had not caused a drop in the general rates of any of these indicators of school failure and delinquent behavior.

The evaluation also showed that relatively few school districts had implemented seriously innovative programs which were rigorously oriented toward meeting the problems of students at risk of failure. Most of the programs were described as in-school suspension type programs which offered little in the way of specialized instruction and support services.

These findings indicate that a major opportunity to reduce delinquency rates through improved educational performance is being missed. The significance of this missed opportunity is heightened by the fact that most juveniles do not return to school after they have been committed to the JJS.

According to the findings of the Alternative Education Evaluation (1981):

> ...too few programs which are truly innovative and creative and which offer real alternatives to the conventional school program have been made available. In-school suspension programs for disruptive students often differ from the conventional school program only because they physically segregate students in separate classrooms. Counseling provided to such students is often very limited, if provided at all. Many programs for disinterested and unsuccessful students vary little in philosophy, content or methodology from state and federally funded compensatory education programs. Although alternative education funds may be used to provide basic skills remediation to students in grades or schools for which state compensatory education and federal Title I funding are not made available, and the intent of

the law is not to provide programs which parallel state or federal compensatory education programs.

Although both the alternative education law and State Board of Education rule encourage school districts to cooperate with other public and private agencies and organizations in order to facilitate the establishment of non-traditional learning experiences and settings, few school districts have exercised this option. Eleven school districts have entered into cooperative agreements within DHRS to furnish instructional personnel to students in twenty-four DHRS residential facilities using state alternative education funds. These programs usually take the form of basic skills remedial instructional programs in public schools only in that they are provided in a classroom located within a DHRS facility. With the notable exception of the Associated Marine Institute Program and the Lee County Alternative Back County Learning Experience, programs which take students out-of-doors and away from a traditional classroom setting are infrequent.

Many alternative programs include instruction in employability skills, pre-vocational training and counseling and vocational education. The enormous potential afforded by cooperative job exploratory and internship programs jointly sponsored by school districts and such state agencies as the Department of Environmental Regulation, Department of Agriculture, Department of Natural Resources, and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has already been tapped, however.

The major policy recommendations contained in the Alternative Education Program Evaluation (OPB, 1981) should be implemented. The recommendations that should receive the highest priority are:

- Proviso language should be included in the Appropriations Act to require that the State Board of Education, in cooperation and consultation with the Department of Education, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature, shall adopt by rule, no later than January 1, 1987, a selected number of performance outcome measures. Such measures shall be used to asses the alternative education program's

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success in achieving those goals and objectives enumerated in Section 230.2315, F.S. Selected measures should reflect the impact the program has had on state-level rates of student suspension,explusion, drop-outs, truancy, referral to special services or agencies, and referral to the juvenile justice system. Any future appropriation for alternative education should be tied to the demonstrated effectiveness of the alternative education program as indicated by selected performance measures.

- It is recommended that the Commissioner of Education be required to prepare an annual report on the State Alternative Education Program. This report shall include, but not be limited to, information on: a) the number of students, by district, grade level and race, participating in state-funded alternative education programs; b) the number of students participating in in-school suspension programs; c) the types of programs to which students were referred; d) the reason(s) for student referral; and e) the effectiveness of the program as measured by those program performance measures adopted by the State Board of Education. This report shall be transmitted to the State Board of Education, the Governor, and the presiding officers of the Legislature.

- Pursuant to the provisions of s. 231.546, F.S., the Florida Education Standards Commission should recommend to the State Board of Education standards relating to programs and policies for the pre-service training, certification, and in-service training of administrative and instructional personnel involved in the State Alternative Education Program.

- The Department of Education and Legislature should conduct close scrutiny of the alternative education cost factor, including an examination of the relative costs of providing the varying kinds of programs presently made available through the State Alternative Education Program. The main purpose of this study should be the development of a funding strategy that supports the creation of serious, innovative alternative programs rather than mere in-school suspension.

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The Task Force on Alternative Education was created by the 1984 Legislature and reported its findings and recommendations in March, 1985. Implementation efforts should focus on the following recommendations:

- The DOE shall develop policies which allow and promote curriculum flexibility within each type of alternative education program. Such programs shall be required to offer basic subjects of study required for graduation; but shall be flexible in course titles, design, delivery of instruction and student assessment. The DOE shall also develop rules that facilitate the transfer of credit to other programs and districts.

- DOE and HRS shall jointly develop policies and guidelines covering major issues such as attendance, discipline, record sharing and cooperative agreements and disseminate these to local HRS and LES staff responsible for programs in residential facilities.

- Prior to placing a student with a history of disruptive behavior into a long-term alternative to expulsion program for seriously disruptive students, a continuum of educational intervention services shall have been attempted.

- Districts shall develop a plan detailing the procedures to be followed in placing students in such programs. Plans shall reflect the implementation.

- Districts shall develop a plan detailing the procedures to be followed in placing students in such programs. Plans shall reflect the implementation of a continuum of services and the involvement of parents in the assignment of students.

- For alternatives to expulsion, the length of assignment shall not exceed legal limits of expulsion without a full staffing committee review according to procedures established by the district.

- HRS should give high priority in the allocation of Title XX or other future subsidized day care funds to qualifying students in educational programs for pregnant/married students and school districts should cooperate in providing the necessary facilities, transportation and other resources.

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-The Legislature should repeal the limit of two elective credits for remedial courses taken in grades 9-12 and should allow remedial courses to be taken for elective credit. This action will have no effect on the completion of courses required for graduation.

- School districts should place priority on educational programs that lead to high school completion, but shall also offer certain students, in HRS facilities and some school-based alternatives programs (who are 16-years old) the option of studying for and taking the GED. This option should only be available in programs which also offer an academic program.

- Districts should actively seek to identify exceptional students and provide them with appropriate educational services while they reside in an HRS facility.

- Intensive English programs should be funded through a separate weighted cost factor and should be considered part of a district's language arts program rather than an alternative education program.

Although the focus of this section has been on middle and high school age children, some consideration must be given to the need for improved and expanded preschool programs and their apparent contributions to reduced rates of learning disability and delinquency.

High quality early childhood education enables families and communities to improve the life chances of their children. Long-term research shows that young adults, now 19 years old, who attended a high quality preschool program made greater gains in education, employment, and social responsibility than similar young adults who did not attend preschool.

- <u>In education</u>:
  Fewer classified as mentally retarded (15% vs. 35%).
  More completed high school (67% vs. 49%).
  More attended college or job training programs (38% vs. 21%).

- <u>In the world of work</u>:
  More hold jobs (50% vs. 32%).
  More support themselves by their own (or spouse's) earnings (45% vs. 25%).
  More satisfaction with work (42% vs. 26%).

- In the community:
  Fewer arrested for criminal acts (31% vs. 51%).
  Fewer arrested for crimes involving property or violence (24% vs. 38%).
  Fewer minor offenses (2% vs. 15%).

  Lower birth rate (64 vs. 117 per 100 women).
  Fewer on public assistance (18% vs. 32%).

These gains lead to substantial economic benefits for the community. An investment in preschool returns $7 for every $1 invested (based on one year of preschool after adjusting for inflation and discounting at 3% to estimate present value).

High quality early childhood education helps children become successful adults. It also reduces major social and economic problems within a community. Preventing lifelong problems in high-risk children is a better community investment than attempting to correct them.

One of the keys to the success of this and similar programs is parent involvement. In Head Start and in other early intervention projects, it is the changes in the parents' self-esteem, attitudes toward their children's education, sense of empowerment in returning to school, improving their jobs and housing and overall financial status, which may have the most lasting beneficial effect on the children.

Employment, Education and Training Strategies for Delinquent Youth

Employment and training strategies for delinquent youth initiated by the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (amended CETA) focused on in-school education projects tied to work experience/on-the-job training in jobs related to a student's career goals. This approach was not always successful but it worked often enough to show what is possible. Another approach was The Young Adult Conservation Corps Program. Participants realized the immediate benefits of their work in that they could see, feel and touch products they helped create. Florida ran a combination of residential and non-residential programs with cities, counties, state agencies, and non-profit organizations operating programs. One of the best of these was operated by the Associated Marine Institute, Inc. (AMI).

AMI provides juveniles in their programs with goal-oriented work and academic education in marine and environmental projects. AMI programs are community based so that a participant does not leave his/her home community. Programs

are not residential, so participants could live at home or in group homes and report to AMI daily. Work programs are provided by the Department of Natural Resources and local agencies. AMI is able to solicit and obtain private donations (boats, equipment, money, etc.) so they are not solely dependent on federal and state funding. Projects include: artifical reef construction, coastal fishing and sport fishing surveys, and fishing gear research.

The following recommendations should be considered in any effort to develop programs designed to improve the employability of juvenile offenders.

- The State should develop a testing, assessment, program counseling, advisement education work program which would be applicable with modification to all commitment programs. The program should have such features as:

  - Comprehensive assessment of talents, skills, and career goals.

  - A portion of each day should be devoted to academic education with constant review of progress, goal achievement, problem identification, etc.

  - The balance of the day should be devoted to work in jobs related to a stated career goal (to the extent practicable).

  - Where there is a scarcity of jobs in a local labor market for youth, the program should attempt to create small scale business enterprises where youth participate, using a phased system, in all aspects of conducting and organizing a small business. Assistance from local vocational education institutions could be provided. Financial planning, accounting and record keeping, production, sales/marketing and other related aspects of small business development should be incorporated into the academic instruction. (See Lively Vo-Tech Center's curriculum).

  - Relationships with business and industry are very useful for those chosing conventional occupations. These programs should not, however, duplicate programs existing in schools or JTPA programs.

- Specific delineation of responsibilities should be set forth in agreements between program operators and the employment training system in place. (JTPA/ES/ Voc. Ed.)

- The State should implement an On-The-Job (OTJ) training program for delinquent youth. OTJ was one of the least used, but most successful CETA programs. For adjudicated youth, the problems in establishing a successful OTJ program would be substantial but not insurmountable.

- The State should implement a Conservation Corps program, modeled on the Job Corps program for 14-23 year old youth. The program should be mainly community based for 14-18 year olds.

Such a program should focus on marketing the skills and abilities of juveniles (e.g., a street hustler might make an excellent sales person). Taggart (A Fisherman's Guide to Employment Training, 1981) shows that many people from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds are capable of making a "quantum leap" from an unskilled, undereducated, unemployed person to a skilled, educated, employed, and contributing member of the community. In order to work, the program must be carefully designed and implemented and include a full follow-up capacity. The program should be comprehensive and not penalize program operators for motivating youth to return to school.

OTJ job development (finding an employer willing to take a chance on a youth) will be difficult due to competing groups attempting to do the same thing for displaced homemakers, older workers, unemployed heads of households and numerous other target groups. It is, therefore, essential that programs be closely coordinated so that businesses are involved from the beginning.

Education, Employment and Delinquency

The relationships among educational experiences, constructive involvement in the community, and delinquency are not simple. They are multifaceted and difficult to inventory, much less predict and control. The complexity, however, should not preclude attempts to develop informed policies and programs designed to assist children and families who are victimized by them.

Although there is no unmediated direct relationship between school failure and delinquent behavior, we do know that the vast majority of juvenile offenders are deficient in academic skills, particulary reading, and that most do not return to finish school after they have been released from a commitment program. Many have dropped out of school before being committed to the juvenile justice system. We also know that most juvenile offenders who were out of school before arrest or commitment were not working and that most are not able to gain employment after release from a program. What these facts mean is that many juvenile offenders are neither working nor going to school before they enter the juvenile justice system and most do not work or reenter school once they leave the system. They, in effect, constitute a very large group of idle youth, whose very idleness creates a substantial inducement to delinquent behavior.

The magnitude of the school dropout and youth unemployment problem is reflected in the following national data. We do not yet have fully comparable data for Florida.

- About 28% of America's 17 and 18-year olds do not graduate from high school. In some urban areas, the dropout rate is above 50%.

- At least 700,000 young people leave school each year. Another 300,000 are chronic truants.

- Hispanics have the highest dropout rate of any ethnic group; almost half the Hispanic students who enter high school do not finish. In many urban schools, Hispanic dropouts have reached alarming rates--New York, 80%; Chicago, 70%; and Los Angeles, 50%.

- Between 1970 and 1983, the U.S. economy created jobs for 22 million new workers. Nineteen percent of these jobs went to youth between the ages of 16 and 24. One-tenth of 1% of the jobs went to black male youth.

- While nearly 7.1 million new jobs have been created since November 1982, teenagers, who represent 18% of the unemployed, have suffered a net loss of nearly 34,000 jobs.

- Overall youth unemployment has risen steadily over the past 30 years. In 1950,

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12% of teenagers aged 16-19 were unemployed. By 1980, 18% were unemployed. Teenage unemployment peaked in December 1982 at 24.5%. (By October 1984, it dropped to 18.8%.)

- Far more black youth are unemployed than white. In 1955, only 2% more blacks were unemployed. But by October 1984, the difference had reached 28%. Only six out of every ten black teenagers have full-time jobs.

- Thirty-two percent of 16 to 24-year old blacks and minorities are neither in school nor employed.

- Business and industry currently spend $40 billion annually to train employees. A troubling amount of this training involves remedial work in reading, mathematics and other basic skills.

- The costs of doing nothing about youth unemployment are high. The State of Michigan estimated the cost of youth unemployment at $100 million a year, taking only a few obvious factors into account. The City of New York estimated the yearly cost per 1,000 youth at almost $12 million in ungenerated productivity, $63,000 in ungenerated income tax, $250,000 in ungenerated sales tax, and $300,000 in total tax loss.

- New York City estimated that for every 1,000 20-year olds put to work, $1.25 million would be added to city coffers in the first year alone. A reduction of the youth unemployment rate to 21.9% for 16 to 19-year olds and 9.5% for 20 to 21-year olds (both reasonable goals) would contribute $10 million/year to city coffers and pump more than $300 million a year into the city's economy.

Other trends that either reflect or influence the drop-out, unemployment, and delinquency patterns among youth are:

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- Arrests of people under 18 for drug abuse increased 60-fold between 1960 and 1980, as the use of drugs spread from urban minorities to the white middle class. Although drug use may now be declining somewhat, in 1980 nearly two-thirds of all high school seniors reported they had used an illicit drug. Arrests for drunkenness rose by 300% between 1960 and 1980. One in six deaths among young people is alcohol related.

- About 650,000 babies are born each year to unmarried teenaged mothers. The rate of out-of-wedlock births is growing faster for whites than for non-whites.

- The homocide rate for non-white young people has been much higher than the rate for whites; however, the rate for whites rose 232% between 1950 and 1978 while the rate for non-whites rose only 18%. Suicide rates for young people doubled between 1950 and 1978.

- Only one-third of the 2.7 million students with limited English receive any special help. That figure drops to 10% for Hispanic students. Only 3% of teachers are prepared to instruct limited-English students while 25% of teachers have such students in their classes.

- The number of single-parent families has grown from 9% of all families in 1960 to 17% in 1984. Children of single-parent families are less likely to finish high school or enter college and are less likely to grow up with a socialization toward civic responsibility or a strong sense of self-esteem.

- Legal immigration has more than doubled since 1950 to over 600,000 per year and illegal immigration adds several hundred thousand more each year. This requires the civic education of large numbers of people from cultures that do not share a tradition of civic involvement.

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- The poverty rate has increased from 11% of the total population to over 15% since 1980.

- Service sector employment will continue to grow. Displaced workers may move into service temporarily. Workers who once saw service employment as a temporary resort now tend to build careers there. Minorities will increasingly develop careers in the service sector, which pays less than the primary labor market.

These trends indicate that without effective public and private sector interventions, the drop out, unemployment, and delinquency problems of the past and present are likely to grow in the future. One major demographic trend, however, may serve to moderate the growing magnitude of these problems over the next ten years. Young adults will decline as a share of the population from 23% in 1978 to 16% in 1995, shrinking by one-quarter the size of the entry-level workers, and require employers to hire more women, minorities and traditionally at-risk youth. Training costs for these workers will be higher. Pressures upon the schools to upgrade the skills of graduates will mount.

By 1990, education and training in schools and businesses will become the largest industry in America. Over the next decade, schooling and retraining costs will range from $513 to $780 billion. As the need to improve the productivity of human resources grows, the traditional lines between education and training for work will blur; business and education needs, responsibilities and instructional techniques will increasingly converge.

The multifaceted nature of these problems will not respond to a single policy initiative. A more comprehensive policy framework based on multiple program strategies is required to meet the many different needs of youth outside the mainstream of American life. The State and the private sector should develop a comprehensive youth policy focusing on the educational, employment, social service, and medical needs of these youth. The policy should address not just the needs of youth who are undereducated, unemployed or delinquent, but should also be designed to respond to the problems of children served by programs addressed in the following reports in this series.

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Any effort to develop a comprehensive state youth policy should include, in addition to the other programs and policies recommended in this issue paper, consideration of the following programs which have been recommended by the Education Commission of the states.

. Youth Service Programs - Aside from national programs such as the volunteer armed forces, the Peace Corps, the Job Corps, and various federal programs for youth, over 30 state and/or local jurisdictions offer a variety of service corps programs. These tend to be projects that benefit the community, such as resource conservation, emergency relief, care for the elderly or work rebuilding roads, bridges or inner-city neighborhoods. Outstanding examples include the California Conservation Corps; the San Francisco Conservation Corps; Canada's national youth service program, Katimayik; and the City Volunteers Service in New York City.

Business and labor can help start such programs, can provide expertise during their operation, and can integrate them with employment needs in the community.

. School/Business Partnerships - Numerous school/business partnerships of various kinds have been set up around the nation. Some of these involve training youth while they are still in school (the "earn-and-learn" approach); some involve exchanges of expertise or facilities for summer opportunities; some involve internships and mentor programs; and others consist of joint efforts to define school and employment policies for particular communities.

. Youth Enterprise - Many more young people want to work than can find work. Many are talented enough to run their own enterprises and could do so successfully with the right kinds of encouragement, incentive and support. Junior Achievement, and activities carried out by 4-H Clubs in some rural areas are good models.

Business can play a major role in developing youth enterprises. Groups such as Kiwanis Club, local Chambers of Commerce, or private industry councils can be instrumental in spreading and supporting the concept.

. Alternative Schools - Alternative schools offer special instruction for at-risk students who are unable to learn in traditional settings. Generally, alternative schools offer vocational experience, job-readiness training and internships with local businesses, at costs approximately 1.5 times the costs of traditional schooling. (See the Juvenile Justice and Public Schools section.)

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. Work-Study Programs - The current Vocational Education Act partially funds cooperative education programs for noncollege-bound students. The model is suggestive and could be greatly expanded upon and diversified. Approximately half a student's time must be spent in class and half on the job. Programs may include contracts among youth, school and employer; job-readiness training; matching of academic programs, aptitude, interest and employment experience; networks of employers prepared to hire work-study graduates; and special services.

. Job-Readiness Training - Job-readiness training involves short (one to four weeks) intensive programs that focus on meeting the demands and expectations of employers. At-risk youth can be counseled about interviewing, dress, references or behavior conducive to employment; some programs even offer instruction in reading, writing, speaking and mathematics.

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Appendix A
Table 1

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

NUMBER OF AVAILABLE SLOTS FOR COMMITTED CHILDREN

END OF YEAR WORKLOAD

Commitment Programs	FY 83-84	Change	FY 84-85	Change	FY 85-86
Intensive Counseling	176	+136	312	+52	364
Intensive Work	-	-	-	+256	256
TRY Centers	45	-	45	-	45
Associates Marine Institutes (non-residential)	111.5	+15	126.5	-	126.5
Family Group Homes (100%)	142	-	142	+15	157
Project STEP	30.5	-	30.5	+40.5	71
STOP Camps	72	-	72	+18	90
Florida Key Marine Institute	50	-	50	-	50
San Antonio Boys Village	14	+2	16	-	16
Group Treatment Homes	42	-	42	-	42
Youth Homes of Florida, Inc.	12	+12	24	-	24
*Halfway Houses	373	+3	376	-	376
**START Centers	134	-28	106	-	106
Jacksonville Youth Development Center	40	-	40	-	40
STAY Centers	-	84	84	+84	168
Dade Intensive Control Program	-	+20	20	-	20
Broward Control Treatment Unit	-	+28	28	-	28
**Training Schools	1041	(-180)	861	-418 or -443	-418 or -443
Florida Environmental Instutute (non-residential)	15	-	15	-	15
Florida Environmental Institute (residential)	30	-	30	-	30
Totals	2328	92	2420	+47.5 or +22.5	2442.5 or 2467.5

*The Alachua Halfway House will add 28 slots but the conversion of Duval Hall to a STAY Center will reduce the number of slots by 25.

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**The Polk START Center will be converted to a STAY Center.

**The number of slots will vary depending on whether Dozier or Okeechobee is closed.